

# Community Presbyterian Church

open hearted, open minded

April 6, 2025

Welcome to worship  
this morning!

Bulletin Cues:

**Bold** indicates congregational  
response,

\* indicates please stand, if able

WELCOME AND  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

We come to worship  
because we long for mercy.

**We long for community.**

**We long for God.**

We come to worship  
because we need a good word.

**We need connection.**

**We need moral reminders.**

We come to worship because we are in between:

**hope and grief,**

**faith and doubt,**

**joy and longing,**

**curiosity and conviction.**

So we come to worship and God meets us here.

**Surely, we are not alone. Thanks be to God for meeting us in the middle! Amen.**



1 Just as I am, with - out one plea but that thy  
 2 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - ya  
 3 Just as I am, thou wilt re - ceive, wilt wel - come,  
 4 Just as I am, thy love un-known has bro - ken

blood was shed for me, and that thou biddest me  
 con - flict, man - ya doubt, fight - ings and fears with -  
 par - don, cleanse, re - lieve; be - cause thy prom - ise  
 ev - ery bar - rier down; now to be thine, yea,

come to thee,  
 in, with - out,  
 I be - lieve, O Lamb of God, I come; I come!  
 thine a - lone,

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, our faith calls us to live with both mercy and righteousness.

Somewhere along the way, however, we have forgotten that truth. Somewhere along the way, we began arguing about who deserves mercy and whether or not they had acted with enough righteousness to receive it.

Fortunately, God does not act that way. No matter what mistakes we have made or wrong turns we've taken, God consistently meets us with mercy and invites us to try again. So let us lean into that good news, and go to God in prayer:

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Merciful God,**

**When we fail to be righteous, show us mercy.**

**When we fail to be merciful, show us what is right.**

**Again and again, bring us closer to you.**

**Again and again, show us the way.**

**Amen.**

## WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Family of faith, hear and believe this good news:

When we fail to be righteous,

**God is merciful.**

When we fail to be merciful,

**God invites us to try again.**

Again and again,

**God moves closer to us.**

Again and again,

**God shows us the way.**

Thanks be to God for this unending love.

**Amen.**

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Loving God, Week after week we return to this space, because we long to see you. Like Zacchaeus who climbed a tree to get a peek at you as you walked by, we come to this sanctuary hoping to get a peek of your goodness, of your joy, of your light. So speak to us through these ancient words. Let us get a peek of the love that lingers here. Gratefully we pray, amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 43:16–21

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,  
who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior;  
they lie down; they cannot rise; they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:

Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old.  
I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.  
the wild animals will honor me,  
the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness,  
rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people,  
the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

**Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with shouts of joy;**  
then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”

**The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.**

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.

**May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.**

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,  
**shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

*Jesu, Son of God Most Holy*

CPC Choir

By Jane Foster Knox and Mark Wilson

*Jesu, Son of God most holy,  
King of Glory, Love Divine;  
Jesus, feed us with your spirit  
In the broken bread and wine.*

*Here is your table, spread with joy;  
Feast of the Holy One.  
Pleading for pardon, seeking your mercy,  
Knowing our sin, we come.*

*Jesu, Son of God most holy.  
King of Glory, Love Divine;*

*Jesu, feed us with your spirit  
In the broken bread and wine.*

*“Here is my body, broken for you;  
Take it, remembering me.  
Here is my blood, the cup of salvation,  
Flowing forever free.”*

*Jesu, send us from your table to the duties that we share,  
Gladly serving you and others,  
Unafraid to love and dare, Unafraid to love and dare.*

#### GOSPEL READING

Luke 19:1-10

He entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, “He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.” Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.” Then Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.”

We proclaim Christ crucified— the wisdom and power of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### SERMON

Rev. Tim Gerarden

#### RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE

#### INVITATION TO OFFERING

Through the grace of God, we have gifts in abundance and pour them out like perfume from a flask, not for our sakes, but to worship the One who lavishes love on the world.

*An offering plate is placed near the back of the room to receive your offerings and is available before, during the hymn of the day and shortly following the service.*

#### \*HYMN OF THE DAY

Righteous Mercy



Since our child - hood you have taught us what is wrong  
Though there's wide - ness in your mer - cy, let us not  
Far too of - ten we hold on - to an - ger dressed



and what is right Nur - tur - ing our sense of  
a - buse that grace Called in - to this Chris - tian  
as righ - teous - ness We for - get we serve a

8



jus - tice, fuel - ing us to work and fight Keep that  
jour - ney, let our lives re - flect our faith When we  
God who calls us to re - la - tion - ship So when

14



fire for jus - tice burn - ing in the sha - dow  
fal - ter and fall short of our com - mit - ment  
those who caused us harm re - pent and choose a

19



of our fear E - ven there your Spi - rit's stir - ring,  
to your will Hold us, wrap - ping us in your love  
bet - ter way Spi - rit move our venge - ful hearts

25



light - ing us a path that's clear  
as we work toward whole - ness still  
to choose love in - stead of wrath

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

You have shown us, O God, the sacrifice that you desire. Now use these gifts— and use our lives— to liberate the oppressed, to break the bonds of injustice, to feed the hungry, welcome the poor, and unite the human family; all in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## JOYS AND CONCERNS/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus as we pray for the world he came to save, saying: Have mercy, O God; **hear our prayer...**

As we pour out our hearts in prayer, O God, lead us to pour out our lives in service to you— ever seeking your will, ever following your way; all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION WITH ALL GOD'S SAINTS

### INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

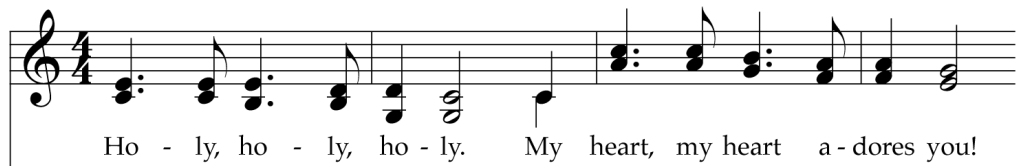
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God... Therefore we praise you, joining the song of the universal church and the heavenly choir:

SANCTUS GTG 595

Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart, my heart a - dores you!



My heart knows how to say to you: you are ho - ly, Lord!

Blessed is Jesus Christ, our Savior...

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father and Mother in heaven, hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;  
and let us not be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen**

### THE BREAD AND CUP ARE SHARED

*For communion, gluten free bread and grape juice are served for all who partake.  
Please take and eat the bread as it is served, and then as a sign of unity, hold the cup  
until all are served so that we might partake together.*

### HYMN DURING DISTRIBUTION GTG 519

### You Are My Strength



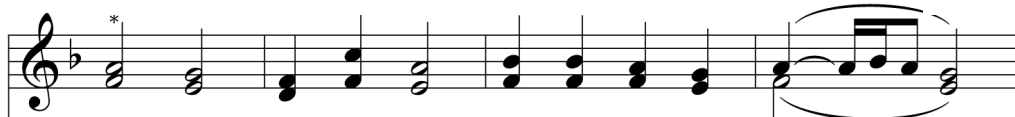
You are my strength when I am weak; you are the treasure that I



seek; you are my all in all. When I fall down, you pick me



up; when I am dry, you fill my cup; you are my all in all.



Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name!



Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name!



## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Giving God, living Lord, you have fed us with your body. You have poured out your life that we might live. We thank you, for we have tasted your goodness in this meal. Fed, we are strengthened; filled, we are renewed to share the abundance of your love with a hungry world. **Amen.**

## SENDING INTO THE WORLD TO LOVE AND SERVE

\*CLOSING HYMN GTG 697      Take My Life      *verses 1-3, 6 (next page)*

### \*CHARGE AND BLESSING

As you leave this place,  
may you find God in every messy middle.  
May you know that the world is bigger than two sides.  
May you trust that you are made in the image of God,  
and therefore, you contain multitudes.  
So may you move through this world with an open heart,  
with a curious mind, and with the confidence that you do not go alone.  
God is with you in the mountains,  
in the valleys,  
and everywhere in between.  
Believe that good news, and go in peace.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

Liturgy, Poetry and Prayers by Rev. Sarah A. Speed  
A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)



You are invited to bring flowers on Easter Sunday! Any spring flowers are just fine... if you choose to bring an Easter Lily, please remove the stamens in the center of the flower as that helps those that are allergic to them.

Maundy Thursday  
Soup and Bread  
Dinner and Worship  
Sign up in the narthex to bring  
soup or bread! Dinner at 6 pm,  
Worship at 7 pm on April 17!



1 Take my life and let it be con-se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee;  
 2 Take my hands and let them move at the im - pulse of thy love;  
 3 Take my voice and let me sing al - ways, on - ly, for my King;  
 4 Take my sil - ver and my gold; not a mite would I with - hold;

take my mo - ments and my days; let them flow in  
 take my feet and let them be swift and beau - ti -  
 take my lips and let them be filled with mes - sa -  
 take my in - tel - lect and use ev - ery power as

cease - less praise; let them flow in cease - less praise.  
 ful for thee, swift and beau - ti - ful for thee.  
 ges from thee, filled with mes - sa - ges from thee.  
 thou shalt choose, ev - ery power as thou shalt choose.

5 Take my will and make it thine;  
 it shall be no longer mine.  
 Take my heart, it is thine own;  
 it shall be thy royal throne,  
 it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
 at thy feet its treasure store;  
 take myself and I will be  
 ever, only, all for thee,  
 ever, only, all for thee.



## Zacchaeus

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Luke 19:1-10

Digital painting

I had a lot of fun discovering new layers to this familiar story. I learned that Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore fig tree, which was a food source for poor people because the fruit was bitter and generally undesirable.<sup>9</sup> I had always imagined a fruitless tree, but the presence of fruit opened up interesting avenues to explore. The root word for sycamore tree is *σῦκον*, meaning “fig,” and as I did a study of other key words in the text, I noticed this same root word in *συκοφαντεω*, or “defrauded,” which was used to describe what Zacchaeus did to his community. It was curious to me that the root word for “defrauded” was “fig,” so I dug deeper to find that the Greek word was from the phrase “fig-informer” or a person who would notify authorities if one was exporting figs from Greece without paying a tax. It seemed that these “fig-informers” would use the threat of exposure to extort money from fig farmers. This is where the word “sycophant”

comes from, which evolved to more generally describe a “malignant accuser from love of gain,” which perfectly describes Zacchaeus.<sup>10</sup>

Jesus calls Zacchaeus out of his identity as “sycophant” into his new identity as “repentant host” who invites Jesus into his home and redistributes his ill-gotten wealth. Zacchaeus’s clothing holds a repeated pattern of four figs and halves of coins, referencing the fruits of his transformation.

The area where Zacchaeus sat in the tree is fruitless and dying. His actions were destructive and oppressive to his own community. The crowd is correct in grumbling about him; their anger is righteous, but Jesus offers mercy. In this visual metaphor, Jesus removes him from the tree so it has a chance to heal and nourish the whole community. Jesus’ clothing is patterned with suns, representing righteousness, and water, representing mercy, because it is through his merciful actions that righteousness for the community is achieved.

—Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

<sup>9</sup> *Fauna and Flora of the Bible*, by United Bible Societies. (United Bible Societies, 1980). 179-181.

<sup>10</sup> For discussion of the word “sycophant” (Strong’s G4811), please see: [blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4811/kjv/tr/0-1/](http://blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4811/kjv/tr/0-1/)

# Community Presbyterian Church

open hearted, open minded



**Sunday, April 6**

**9:30 am Worship with Communion**  
- Onsite and Online

2:30 pm Building Usage: Labranza de Dios

**Tuesday, April 8**

9:30 am PW Bible Study

12:00 pm Items for the Bulletin are due

7:00 pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network

**Wednesday, April 9**

9:00 am Prayer Group

6:30 pm Jubellation Handbell Rehearsal

7:30 pm CPC Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, April 10**

5:30 pm Great Room Use: Labranza de Dios

**Friday, April 11**

6:30 pm Library, Great Room Use:  
SE MN ASD Social Group

**Sunday, April 13 Palm Sunday**

**9:30 am Worship - Onsite and Online**

**10:40 am Nominating Committee Meeting**

2:30 pm Building Usage: Labranza de Dios



Judy Leal

Jane and Ed Burgstaler family,  
especially daughters Jenny & Elissa

Nellie Brovold's mother, Jacqueline

Jennifer Hall and Sage Hall

Bill and Ronda Marshall and family

Shannon Cisewski

Amy Ward and family

*To be added to the prayer list, please contact the office: 507-280-9291 or via email: [office@cpcrochester.org](mailto:office@cpcrochester.org).*

## Serving in Worship Today

Guest Preacher Rev. Tim Gerarden

Guest Pianist Peggy Pillers

Liturgist Sue Chipman

IT Support Louis Bouchard  
& Bruce Felger

## Church Staff

Music Director Jennifer Taylor

Custodian Nancy Sanford

Office Manager Stephanie Pasch